

'Uncle Awad' Has Large Following**An Arabic-Speaking USIS Officer Is Star Performer on Moroccan TV***Last of Three Articles*

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RABAT, Morocco — An Arabic-speaking U.S. Government information officer has become one of the most popular performers on Moroccan television.

"Uncle Awad" is the name under which Awad Hanna, veteran representative of the U.S. Information Service, conducts a weekly question-and-answer program for Moroccan children. The title was supplied by his Moroccan hosts, who asked him to start the program.

After six months, young listeners writing in demanded that some sort of club be established. "Uncle Awad's Friends Club" has amassed 610 members in three weeks.

A large crowd attended the launching of helium-filled balloons to advertise the program. Finders are asked also to write in.

All this has taken place in a country that is still more than 80 per cent illiterate and where there are only 19,000 television sets. But the fact that 7000 of these are community sets means that the potential audience can be as large as one million.

The 42-year-old Hanna, a Palestinian by birth who studied at the American University in Beirut, came to the United States in 1947 at the urging of relatives and of his New Jersey-born wife, the former Jasmine Moussa, who also grew up in Palestine.

Hanna joined the predecessor of the U.S. Information Agency in 1952. He was assigned to Morocco in 1961 after previous service in Washington and in Egypt.

Because he speaks Arabic as a native, Hanna quickly made friends among Moroccans and rarely spent an evening with his wife and children during his first few months here. When Moroccan television was established in 1962, he offered American

films to fill program niches and create interest.

A program he prepared on Elia Abu Madi, the Arab-American poet, so intrigued the Moroccan Minister of Information that Hanna was asked to take on a regular stint.

Now he is such a trusted institution that Moroccan officials consult him on such controversial programs as films about Viet-Nam.

There is plenty of need for information on this point because many media here de-

pend on a French news service which some Moroccan officials say is slanted.

L' Opinion, daily paper of the Istiqlal (Independence) Party, recently published a front-page headline saying, "A war is imminent if the Americans do not stop bombing North Viet-Nam," and then in smaller type, "in the opinion of Cyrus Eaton." The French-originated news item from Detroit justifying the headline

was tucked on an inside page.

Now Hanna's Uncle Awad show is to be expanded, and in addition he will soon have a five-minute daily program on Arab poetry, stressing freedom and the dignity of man and love of country. Among other activities Hanna has given 51 lectures in cities and towns around Morocco. A favorite theme is the accomplishments of Arabs in America.